

Notice of Allowability

Application No.

10/757,699

Examiner

Phuongchi Nguyen

Applicant(s)

AIHARA ET AL.

Art Unit

2833

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☐ This communication is responsive to ____.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 1-6.
3. ☒ The drawings filed on 14 January 2004 are accepted by the Examiner.
4. ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: ____.


Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.

THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

5. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
6. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
- (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
- 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date ____.
- (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date ____.
- Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
7. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. ☒ Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08), Paper No./Mail Date ____
4. ☐ Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit of Biological Material
5. ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6. ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413), Paper No./Mail Date ____
7. ☒ Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. ☒ Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. ☐ Other ____


ROSS GUSHI
PRIMARY EXAMINER

EXAMINERS AMENDMENT AND REASONS FOR ALLOWANCE

1. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a personal interview with Mr. Gerald E. Hespos on August 19, 2004.

2. The application has been amended as follows (the amendment is that the reference numerals of claims 1-6 have been deleted).

*** Claim 1 (Currently Amended):**

A connector comprising:

a housing for receiving at least one terminal fitting;

a retainer engageable with the housing at a first position where the retainer is lightly assembled with the housing to permit the insertion and withdrawal of the terminal fitting and at a second position where the retainer is deeply assembled with the housing to lock the terminal fitting in the housing;

at least one housing rib projecting from an outer surface of the housing for insertion into an accommodating groove in a receptacle of a mating housing; and

at least one retainer rib formed on the retainer and substantially aligned with the housing rib along a connecting direction of the two housings, the retainer rib having a projecting end projecting out beyond the housing rib when the retainer is at the first position while projecting no farther than the housing rib when the retainer is at the second position.

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* Claim 2 (Currently Amended):

The connector of claim 1, wherein the projecting end of the retainer rib is substantially flush with the housing rib when the retainer is at the second position.

* Claim 3 (Currently Amended):

The connector of claim 1, wherein the housing comprises at least one auxiliary housing rib on an outer surface thereof different from an outer surface through which the retainer is mounted.

* Claim 4 (Currently Amended):

The connector of claim 3, wherein the housing rib and the auxiliary housing rib have front ends substantially aligned along the connecting direction.

* Claim 5 (Currently Amended):

The connector of claim 1, wherein the housing rib is dimensioned to prevent the housing from being fit into the receptacle of the mating housing while forcibly deforming the receptacle.

* Claim 6 (Currently Amended):

A connector assembly comprising the connector of claim 1 and a mating connector to be connected therewith.

3. Claims 1-6 are allowed.

4. Claims 7-13 are deleted.

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5. The following is an examiner's statement of reason for allowance: None of prior art teach or suggest a connector having a retainer rib substantially aligned with the housing rib along a connecting direction of the two housings, the retainer rib having a projecting end projecting out beyond the housing rib in the first position while projecting no farther than the housing rib when the retainer is at the second position.

6. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Tsuji et al (6692302; 5980332 and 6733346); Konoya et al (US6139375) ; Sakurai et al (US6599154) ; Nankou et al (US6702627) ; Atsumi Keigo (US6036552) are cited to show in the electrical connector having retainer engaging with the housing.

7. Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Phuongchi Nguyen whose telephone number is (571) 272-2012. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:00AM-4:00PM.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

PCN August 20, 2004

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PRIMARY EXAMINER

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